PUBLIC

EXPRESSIONS OF GRIEF,

FOR THE *DEATH* OF

General George Washington,

AT

DORCHESTER.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

TOWN OF DORCHESTER,

RELATIVE TO THE 22d OF FEBRUARY, 1800.

THE Citizens of Dorcheſter, conformably to the recommendation of the Government of the United States, and the according ſentiments and feelings of their own hearts (having previouſly aſſembled in legal town meeting, and appointed a Committee* to arrange the proceedings and ceremonies of the day) obſerved the *22d of February, one thouſand eight hundred*, in teſtimony of their "grief for *the Death* of

GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON,"

in the following manner:

SIXTEEN minute guns were diſcharged by a detachment of Capt. *Lyon*'s company of Artillery, from an eminence near the meeting houſe, at ſun riſe. The bell tolled half an hour from that period. A national flag was diſplayed from the gun houſe at *half ſtaff*. The bell rang at ten

* THE Committee of Arrangements were, OLIVER EVERETT, Eſq. Gen. STEPHEN BADLAM, EBENEZER WALES, Eſq. MOSES EVERETT, Eſq. Mr. JOHN HOWE, EBENEZER CLAP, Eſq. Mr. SAMUEL WITHINGTON, Major. JAMES ROBINSON, Capt. SAMUEL B. LYON, and the Selectmen of the Town, Meſſrs. EBENEZER TOLMAN, ENOS BLAKE, JOHN BAKER, MATHER WITHINGTON, and THOMAS MOSELEY.

o'clock, for assembling the inhabitants. At eleven a procession was formed, in the upper road, and moved to the meeting house, under the direction of Major *Edward Robinson*, and Capt. *Thomas Tileston*, Marshals, in the order following :

Male Children 7 years old and upwards.
Masters of the Public Schools.
Four Military Companies in complete uniform, with side arms ; commanded by Captains *Henry Cox*, *Edward Pierce*, jun. *Pearson Eaton*, and *Samuel B. Lyon*.
Capt. *Davis*'s Company of Cavalry, dismounted.
Martial Music.
Citizens. Military Officers.
Deacons of the Church.
Selectmen and Committee of Arrangements.
Clergyman and Orator.

The bell tolled while the Procession moved, and cannon were discharged at intervals of 5 minutes.

Solemnities in the Meeting House were introduced by an occasional *Dirge*, composed by the Rev. Mr. Harris, and performed by a select choir. A *Prayer*, by the Rev. Mr. Harris, was then made. An *Eulogy*, on

General GEORGE WASHINGTON,

by Oliver Everett, Esq. succeeded.

APPROPRIATE Music, and a Benediction, concluded the public services. Cannon were discharged at intervals of 10 minutes, during the same.

IT is no more than just, to observe, that the public Performances fully answered the raised expectations of a numerous and respectable audience. The *Music* was gratifying and pleasing. The *Prayer* was appropriate and excellent; and the *Eulogy* ingenious, elegant, and impressive. The pulpit was covered with black; and the inhabitants of both sexes wore appropriate badges of mourning: Sorrow was visible in every countenance, and strongly marked the general proceedings and transactions of the day; but that *real grief*, with which every *heart* must have been *oppress*, in the *recollection* of that *distressful event*, which had impelled the observance of these *melancholy rites*; in the *reflection* that, WASHINGTON, *the Friend of Mankind, the Protector of Liberty, the Pride, the Saviour of his country, and the admiration of the World, was no more*, cannot be described; *it was felt*.

THE discharge of minute guns, and the tolling of the bell, at sun set, concluded the solemnities of the day.

AT a meeting of the Inhabitants of Dorchester, *March 3d*, 1800. It was voted *unanimously*, that Gen. STEPHEN BADLAM, MOSES EVERETT, Esq. and Mr. JOHN PIERCE, be a Committee, to wait on OLIVER EVERETT, Esq. with the thanks of the Town, for his excellent EULOGY, on Gen. GEORGE WASHINGTON, pronounced the 22d of *Feb.* last, and request a Copy thereof for the press. The same Committee were directed to wait on the Rev. THADDEUS M. HARRIS, and express to him the thanks of the Town, for his excellent DISCOURSE delivered the 29th of *December* last, on the occasion of GENERAL WASHINGTON's Death, and request a Copy for the Press.

THE Committee were further directed, provided they obtained Copies of the said Performances, to cause them, together with PRESIDENT WASHINGTON's VALEDICTORY ADDRESS to the People of the United States, to be published, and bound in one Volume, and to deliver one of the Books to each Family in the Town.

MOSES EVERETT.

By the direction of the Committee for publication.

AN

EULOGY,

ON

General George Washington,

WHO DIED ON THE 14th OF DEC. 1799.

PRONOUNCED AT DORCHESTER,

FEB. 22, 1800.

IT BEING THE DAY RECOMMENDED BY CONGRESS,

FOR THE NATIONAL LAMENTATION

OF HIS DEATH.

By OLIVER EVERETT, Esq. A.M. A.A.S.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE TOWN.

Charlestown:

PRINTED BY SAMUEL ETHERIDGE.

M,DCCC.

EULOGY.

FELLOW-CITIZENS !

THE firſt effuſions of grief, for the death of our beloved WASHINGTON, have been poured forth without meaſure. His venerable remains, with the moſt ſolemn rites, and amidſt the loud lamentations of an agonizing multitude have been committed to the tomb. Already has the national legiſlature decreed and performed for him the higheſt, honorary, funeral obſequies, which gratitude and veneration could ſuggeſt ; and already has their example been followed by vaſt aſſemblies of citizens, through every ſection of the Union. Yet ſtill the patriotic heart dwells on the diſtreſſing ſubject. To-day its emotions are revived. At this period of the year, the birth of America's ILLUSTRIOUS SAVIOUR has been long celebrated. Pleaſure glowed in every countenance ; and the voice of exulting joy rang through the nation. How affecting the change ! To-day we are invited, by the public guardians of our country,

to aſſemble together. The propriety of the call is acknowledged ; but the tear ſtarts from the eye at the reflection ; it is to deplore his death ; to take a ſolemn review of his unequalled virtues and thus to eſtimate the magnitude of our loſs.

RESPECTED COUNTRYMEN !

SPECIAL circumſtances have aſſigned to me an important part in this day's affecting ſolemnities. The want of health and of rhetorical abilities would have fully juſtified an excuſe ; but a veneration for our Magnanimous Patron has not allowed the prevailing influence of theſe reaſons. Your candour is called to its ſevereſt exerciſe. Prepare then, to hear the words of truth, unadorned with the flowers of eloquence, uttered with a feeble voice.

THE anceſtors of General WASHINGTON were reſpectable. From them he received a plentiful fortune, and by private tutors, a good education. Nature furniſhed him with a ſtrong energetic mind, and an heart of keen ſenſibility. By conſtant induſtry, his underſtanding became ſtored with uſeful knowledge, and his temper formed to the moſt perfect order. His judgment was remarkably correct, yet ſurpriſingly rapid. His integrity was unblemiſhed, his humanity ever conſpicuous and his benevolence

unbounded. Neither in action, nor in ſuffering, did his courage, or his prudence ever fail. He poſſeſſed the moral principle in its moſt refined ſtate; and undiſſembled piety dwelt in his heart. From this combination of ſhining virtues, reſulted that undeviating courſe of right actions, which early gained him the reſpect and confidence of his fellow-citizens. Even in the period of his youth, he was entruſted, by his own State, with an important diplomatic commiſſion, and a reſpectable command in the army; and through life, his country was ever ready to confer upon him its higheſt honours, and to place him in its moſt reſponſible ſituations.

He never violated a ſingle truſt. He more than anſwered the public expectation in every one of his numerous appointments; in every one he acquired freſh laurels, and increaſed the general admiration.

In order to illuſtrate the character of General WASHINGTON, it is neceſſary to take a rapid view of the period in which he flouriſhed, and the intereſting circumſtances, which called into exerciſe his pre-eminent abilities.

The importance of civil government has ſtood confeſſed through every age, yet ſo often has liberty and power been abuſed, that many of the

moſt refined philoſophers have been tempted to relinquiſh the ſubject, and commit to chance the general regulations of ſociety. With indignant contempt at the folly of mankind, they have ſought ſhelter under the gloomy ſhades of deſpotiſm, or prepared their minds to be ſwept from the earth, by the overwhelming torrent of public confuſion. But for ſeveral centuries, many circumſtances have been combining, with a powerful energy, to afford a full experiment of the capacity of man for the enjoyment of civil freedom. Among theſe muſt be noticed, the diſcovery of the art of printing, and the uſe of the mariner's compaſs. By the firſt, knowledge has been more univerſally diffuſed, than in all former ages, and by the latter, a general intercourſe among mankind has been effected. Of all other events, the diſcovery of North America is to be conſidered as the moſt important in favour of civil freedom. Here was an aſylum opened for the friends of order and public juſtice, of all nations. The firſt ſettlers were enlightened, virtuous men. Diſguſted with the religious perſecutions and political tyrannies of Europe, they here found room for eſtabliſhment. It was within the reach of every man to acquire a ſubſtantial freehold. The early eſtabliſhment of ſchools and ſeminaries of learning diffuſed uſeful knowledge through every part of the community. Neceſſity produced induſtry. Com-

mon danger, union, mutual wants, benevolence, and religion gave a powerful ſanction to the laws. A general equality of circumſtances created an independent ſpirit; and innumerable ſufferings, both courage and patience.

In this new and ſingular ſociety, a veneration for the parent ſtate was long entertained. Americans gloried in being the deſcendants of Great Britain; they rejoiced in her proſperity; and they fought, under her banners, with undaunted courage. Yet when they ſaw an attempt made to wreſt from them the fruits of their hard earned poſſeſſions, they ventured to complain, and their humble remonſtrances being unheard, they ventured to diſpute the right of their oppreſſors and to throw themſelves into an attitude of defence. Britain remained unmoved, ſhe ſmiled at the feeble menace, and ſent a ſmall force to compel ſubmiſſion. She was ignorant of the American character. She believed us to be an helpleſs race of half ſavages; at beſt but unconnected hordes of ignorant peaſants. Experience diſcovered the fatal error. The Britiſh army was ſucceſsfully oppoſed. But as it was certain that large reinforcements would be ſent to ſupport it, the ſpirit of our citizens was fully tried. Without arms and military ſtores; without ſkill in war, and without an eſtabliſhed government, what rational hopes

of ſucceſs could be entertained? Many, who acknowledged the juſtice of the cauſe ſaw none, but deemed reſiſtance to be madneſs.

THESE impending dangers did not deſtroy the courage of the American patriots. They produced the magnanimous reſolve to be free, or to periſh. An important inquiry was immediately made, who ſhall lead us to the conteſt? What patriotic Hero ſhall conduct us to victory? The good genius of America directed to WASHINGTON. The national council heard her voice and unanimouſly decreed her will. His character gave ſpirit and confidence to the American armies. His penetrating mind diſcovered the moſt ſecret ſources of ſupply, and his military ſkill formed them to order and diſcipline. Your own heights, my fellow-townſmen, are ſtill monuments of his wonderful addreſs, and of the high improvements, which, in a few months, under his command, our patriotic ſoldiers had made. In one night, ſuch regular works were begun and completed on them, as, in the morning, ſurpriſed the enemy; they appeared like the effect of magic, and produced a conviction of the inſtant neceſſity of quitting the harbour and town of Boſton. The prudence of General WASHINGTON was equal to his wiſdom; and united with an inflexible perſeverance, his courage conducted the American armies to a final

triumph. The event humbled our adverſaries and aſtoniſhed the world. America rejoiced in her independence and gratefully acknowledged her Illuſtrious Chief to be the author of it. Nothing leſs than a combination of the wonderful talents which WASHINGTON poſſeſſed, could have brought this revolution to an happy iſſue. Without an American army, WASHINGTON indeed could not have conquered. Without a WASHINGTON, the American armies would have been defeated.

A KNOWLEDGE of human nature and of paſt hiſtory excited a fear, that when our independence was obtained, it would be wreſted from us by the military power which procured it. The conduct of our virtuous Hero proved the unreaſonableneſs of the ſuſpicion. With the ſame modeſty with which he aſſumed, he relinquiſhed his command, and with viſible ſatisfaction retired to the ſhades of private life. Human nature exults in this example of diſintereſted patriotiſm, and miſanthropy can only object that it is a ſolitary one, given by the firſt of men, and will probably never be repeated.

NOT many years, was the American Hero allowed to enjoy that dignified leiſure, which he earneſtly deſired and richly merited. That form of government which was adopted in the midſt

of danger, and under the full influence of political enthuſiaſm, was found incapable of preſerving order, in a time of external peace and ſecurity. A convention was called to correct its errors and ſupply its defects. At the head of this reſpectable body of ſtateſmen was found the former Saviour of our country. His name gave dignity to the aſſembly, and his ſignature confidence in the ſyſtem. It was candidly examined and deliberately adopted.

When this government was at firſt eſtabliſhed, the voice of ſuſpicion was again heard. It provides for a ſtrong executive, and important powers muſt be entruſted with one man. Where ſhall the man be found, who will not abuſe them? America ſmiled at the ignorant ſuggeſtion. Every eye was fixed upon WASHINGTON, every ſuffrage was given to him. With his own diffidence and dignity, he accepted and executed the high, reſponſible office. The declining order and reſpectability of the United States revived, and with them unexampled proſperity.

It was peculiarly happy for America, that when the late commotions in Europe took place, WASHINGTON was our Firſt Magiſtrate. His wiſdom, firmneſs, and impartiality ſaved us from the moſt imminent dangers, preſerved the national dignity, and ſecured our neutral ſituation.

THUS perfectly did the great WASHINGTON merit, by his adminiſtration, the confidence which was repoſed in him. That he governed not for himſelf, but for his country, is evident from hence; that when he believed the conſtitution was well eſtabliſhed, and no immediate danger impending, with unaffected humility, he declined a longer continuance in office. Nor did he adopt this reſolution till his diſcerning mind reſted in the belief, that his eminent copatriot and counſellor would be his ſucceſſor. The ſuffrages of the people did not diſappoint him; they fell on the man of his confidence, the man of his wiſh.

HIS farewell addreſs has been more univerſally read and admired than any other political compoſition. Citizens have you peruſed it? If you have not, ſuffer not the diſgrace. Purchaſe it as an invaluable relict, ſtudy it with attention, teach it to your children, rehearſe it to your friends.

ONCE more was the venerable patriot called by his country, to quit his beloved retirement, and commit his invaluable life to the chance of war. Honour, and even patriotiſm would have juſtified his excuſe. WASHINGTON lived not for himſelf. The love of his country over-

powered every other motive, and he magnanimouſly accepted the perilous charge.

Heaven permitted not this faithful ſervant longer to labour, even for his own country. The irreſiſtible decree was ſent forth to call him to reſt. With the ſame undaunted courage, with which he had ever met his temporal foes, did he meet the king of terrors. The circle of his glory was complete. His mighty energies have ceaſed. The preſent generation delights to appreciate his virtues. Future ages ſhall read and admire his aſtoniſhing hiſtory.

What then remains for us, but to contemplate his wonderful character; impreſs on our minds his diſintereſted counſels, and with all our abilities, confirm and eſtabliſh that ſyſtem of freedom, which we ſo greatly owe to his exertions.

If the eye of our departed Patron can penetrate the veil which ſeparates him, it is now fixed on us! If unimbodied ſpirits can contemplate, his attention is now turned to his dear country! and if he is not ſuperior to pain, its deſtruction muſt produce it! Solemn thought; it muſt baniſh every ſelfiſh principle; it muſt produce the higheſt degree of patriotic ardour.

As our ſituation, for the enjoyment of civil freedom, is certainly the moſt highly favourable, ſo is it the moſt highly reſponſible. If we can give ſtability to our conſtitution, or even allow its principles a fair experiment, it muſt command reſpect, and diſtant nations will imitate our example. But if we ſuffer it to degenerate into anarchy or tyranny, the eye of ſcorn, the finger of contempt will be directed to us. Nor will the diſgrace be momentary, the pages of hiſtory, to the lateſt period of time, will load our memories with the keeneſt execrations.

Every free government is liable to be agitated by factions; ours never has been, and probably never will be, wholly exempted from them. We are warned of the ſecret approach of tyranny. Who are the ſentinels to announce the danger? The citizens, in general, perceive it not; their perſons and their property are ſecure, and the wealth and proſperity of the country are every day increaſed. The ableſt ſtateſmen in this and other countries, admire our conſtitution, and applaud the wiſdom and equity of our laws. Will it not then be prudent to inquire, whether the authors of theſe ſuſpicions are not intereſted men, whoſe object is, not to ſave their country, but to raiſe themſelves on its ruin. Eſpecially, when foreigners appear ſo anxious to warn us of our danger, and teach us the true principles of liberty. Before we liſten

to their counſels, ſhould we not be ſatisfied, that they are not inſidious ſpies, commiſſioned to weaken and divide us, that we may become an eaſy conqueſt.

Every thing which is excellent has its counterfeit, ſo has liberty. The name has been proſtituted to the moſt infamous purpoſes. It has been uſed to flatter men out of their deareſt rights, and to bring whole nations under the yoke of military deſpotiſm. Let the tears of Venice and Switzerland prove the truth of this obſervation; and let the ſufferings of Holland caution America againſt inviting any foreign nation to manage their political affairs.

Thus inſtructed by actual obſervation, thus warned by the fate of other nations, ſhall we be corrupted by political inſtructors, in every view ſuſpicious? Shall we denounce the public miniſters of our own choice, before their crimes are proved? To authorize this meaſure, we ſhall in vain look for a precedent, except in the records of a community, whoſe political and moral maxims (thank God) are not yet current in this country.

Will our enlightened citizens combine to overthrow that conſtitution, without full experiment, which their own hands have ſo lately

eſtabliſhed ? Such abſurdity is only paralleled by the action of ſuicide, in health, in order to avoid natural death.

Will the real American patriots ſhrink from the taſk of defending the laws and liberties of their country, becauſe treacherous citizens, or deſigning foreigners attempt to deſtroy them ? The immortal WASHINGTON did not thus quit the poſt of danger, and yield to his enemies the object of their wiſhes.

Disgusted with the enormous crimes, which anarchy produced, ſome have ſought and obtained a temporary reſt, under the ſhadow of tyranny ; but even this diſgraceful refuge is not left to us. If a free republican ſyſtem cannot be ſupported in this country, certainly the very propoſal of an arbitrary one is abſurd ; it is applying cauſtic to the wound already excoriated beyond meaſure.

In many parts of Europe, tyranny has once flouriſhed ; but in moſt, its period is paſt ; in all its decay is viſible. It is a gourd, which the ſun of ſcience has withered to its root. In North America, the plant could never be produced ; the breath of public opinion poiſons it, in a moment. The genius, habits, education, and intereſts of the North Americans lead to a

republican government. And if the attempt ſhould be made, it would be found as difficult to preſerve order in this ſociety, by tyrannical inſtitutions, as it has been in France, to govern that nation, by republican principles and laws. The ſtateſmen of that country appear to have given up the attempt; and while they continue to flatter the people with the conſtant reiteration of the words *liberty* and *equality*, force them to obedience with the ſame whips and ſcorpions, which were uſed by their ancient oppreſſors. The example of their wretchedneſs ſhould teach every nation to mould its government to the ſtate of ſociety, and to avoid thoſe forms which are hoſtile to it.

The moſt important requiſites for a free government are general union of political ſentiments and real patriotiſm. Deprived of theſe eſſential ſupports, the American conſtitution muſt immediately fall. Our national government embraces a number of free ſtates. Theſe are ingeniouſly repreſented on the public banner, by the character of ſtars. And ſuch is the real connection of the ſyſtem, that if one of theſe ſtars ſhould wander from its fixed ſtation, it would be cruſhed to atoms, by falling on the central body; or, by diverging beyond the ſphere of its influence, be loſt in chaos. The mighty con-

cuſſion, or the unnatural flight would unbalance, and thus imminently endanger the whole.

At a time, when the general peace of the world is diſturbed, when ſocial principles, held ſacred from its foundation, are exploded ; when new maxims of juſtice, morality and religion are eagerly embraced ; and when the great nations of Europe are ruſhing upon each other with inveterate fury, the American patriot muſt naturally tremble for the ſafety of his own country. The principle of ſelf preſervation muſt teach us to quit political ſpeculations, to rally round our exiſting government, and check the progreſs of a revolutionary ſpirit.

By far the greateſt portion of our citizens, it is believed, are friends to order and our excellent conſtitution. But vaſt numbers of theſe, content themſelves with the enjoyment of liberty, and regard with an eye of indifference, the diſputes of profeſſed politicians. But ſhould theſe riſe to a criſis more imminently dangerous, they will quit their eaſe, and will cauſe their voice to be heard. Should no other means be found to recal the nation to reaſon, they will ariſe ; they will take their beloved offspring by the hand, and march towards the tomb of WASHINGTON. Their numbers will multiply at every ſtage.

Around the venerable repoſitory of his aſhes, they will extend a circle, large as the eye can ken. On their bended knees, with their eyes and their hands raiſed towards Heaven, they will ſwear. Yes, by the God of Hoſts they will ſwear, to preſerve from ruin their beloved country; and to perpetuate thoſe national bleſſings which it enjoyed, under the patronage of its departed SAVIOUR. The effect ſhall be wonderful. Patriotiſm ſhall revive; like the electrical flame, it ſhall rapidly extend throughout the Union. Faction ſhall vaniſh. Order ſhall return. Righteouſneſs ſhall reign.

THE END.

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT DORCHESTER,

DEC. 29, 1799.

BEING THE LORD'S DAY AFTER HEARING THE DISTRESSING INTELLIGENCE OF *THE DEATH OF*

General George Washington,

LATE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

AND

COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE AMERICAN ARMIES.

By THADDEUS MASON HARRIS, A. M.

Charlestown:

PRINTED BY SAMUEL ETHERIDGE.

M,DCCC.

DISCOURSE.

CAUTIOUSLY as I have avoided the delineation of character or the diſcuſſion of public affairs in the deſk, I now feel the propriety of introducing them. Yet let it not be thought that I miſtake the office of the chriſtian teacher, or miſapply the appropriate ſervice of this ſacred day. I do not interrupt the ſolemnities of the ſanctuary to compliment human greatneſs or flatter human vanity. I come not to blend the ſpirit of the world with the ceremonies of religion. But I come to humble the pride and abaſe the aſpiring thoughts of man, by ſhewing that the higheſt elevation of rank, or dignity of ſtation, gives no ſecurity, no prerogative, againſt the common fate. I come to remind you that the *great* as well as the *ſmall* are alike mortal, and that, though potentates and rulers are ſtiled GODS, they muſt die like *men*. I come to ſhew you the enſigns of the mighty deſpoiled by death and made trophies of the grave: and to read you a ſalutary leſſon on the inſtability of all earthly

expectations and glory. I come to tell you that the afferter of our country's cauſes, the purchaſer of its liberties, and the guardian of its Independence is no more :—that WASHINGTON *is dead !*—The ſolemn tidings are echoed in groans throughout our continent. The intelligence ſtrikes an awe which will be felt throughout the world. Well may we exclaim in thoſe words inſerted in the

2d. SAMUEL, I. 19.

"*HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN, AND THE WEAPONS OF WAR PERISHED !*"

AGAIN are we aſſured that the mightieſt cannot reſiſt the power of death. He who braved the deſtroyer in the field of battle, when "thouſands fell at his ſide, and ten thouſand at his right hand ;" the intrepid hero, the invincible warrior, muſt at length fall before the conqueror of conquerors, before whom "flight ſhall fail the ſwift, the ſtrong ſhall not ſtrengthen his force, neither ſhall the mighty prevail ;" for no courage can withſtand that conteſt, and "there is no diſcharge in that war." Elſe WASHINGTON, "the valiant, the mighty man, the man of war," had yet lived ſecure in his valor, invincible in his might. But the "laſt enemy" hath obtained a victory over him, and completed a triumph which proſtrates a nation's glory.

At this moment, when every American dwells upon the character of the ILLUSTRIOUS DECEASED, with admiration of his virtues, with gratitude for his ſervices, with lamentations at his death; it will naturally be ſuppoſed that "the prieſts, the miniſters of the Lord, will mourn alſo at the altar," and "ſigh with bitterneſs becauſe of the tidings" that "the mighty man is fallen by whom the Lord gave deliverance to our nation:" and *you*, my hearers, will expect *me* to give utterance to your feelings and my own on this ſolemn occaſion. Come, then, let us diſcourſe of WASHINGTON. The ſubject cannot fail of being intereſting and edifying.

To the biographer and the hiſtorian belong the narrative of his life, and the detail of his military and political ſervices. The very annals of our federated republic are but records of his deeds, its national importance and proſperity a monument to his glory. Yet it cannot be amiſs, my hearers, to remind you of a few particulars which will ſhew how many are our obligations for his ſervices, and how much reaſon we have to revere his memory.

He ſeemed to be raiſed up by Heaven and ſpecially qualified for the conſpicuous part he was to act on the theatre of life. Favored with a firm and robuſt conſtitution of body, a

bold and enterprising spirit, and a clear and comprehensive mind, he was alike calculated to endure the hardships and lead the forces of the field; and to direct the counsels and execute the decisions of the cabinet.

His early youth was honored with military rank, and employed in a civil embassy :* and exhibited specimens of valor, prudence, wisdom, and fidelity, strongly indicative of future greatness ;† so that a pious and eminent divine of those days,‡ speaking of his gallant services, says, "I may point out to the public that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to his country."

We will pass on to the time when these prophetic words were to receive their accomplish-

* In the year 1753, at the age of 21, and already a major and adjutant general in the Provincial service, he was deputed by the governor of Virginia to hold a treaty with various nations of the Western Indians; and, at the same time, he was honoured with a mission to the commander in chief of the French on the Ohio, remonstrating against the inroads they were making on the territory of Virginia, in violation of subsisting treaties between England and France.

† "The gravity and prudence of his youth
The world then noted; and his name was great
In mouths of wisest censure."

‡ Rev. Mr. Davies, then of Virginia, afterwards President of Princeton College.

ment, and the " important ſervice" which they predicted was to be performed.

At the commencement of our late revolution, the provincial congreſs, apprized of his abilities, bravery and worth, " unanimouſly elected and appointed him Commander in Chief of the forces raiſed or to be raiſed for the defence of the Colonies." With unaffected diffidence he accepted the " extenſive and important truſt," declining in the moſt noble and diſintereſted manner, all pecuniary recompence ; and entered upon its " momentous duties" with a reſolution to exert every power he poſſeſſed in the ſervice of his injured country, and for the ſupport of its glorious cauſe : and he did exert them with the utmoſt vigor and the happieſt effect.

Recollect, my friends, for one moment, the perplexing cares with which he was beſet, and the inexpreſſibly trying difficulties he had to encounter. Behold him leading to the field a multitude of hardy peaſants, haſtily aſſembled, deficient in military experience and ſkill, miſerably equipped, and almoſt entirely deſtitute of warlike ſtores, to contend with the braveſt generals, and beſt diſciplined troops* of the mightieſt empire on the globe ! Behold him marſhalling and exerciſing his ſoldiers ; forming them to

* Hence they were called Regulars through the whole war.

habits of ſubordination ; inuring them to fatigue ; reconciling them to hardſhips ; accuſtoming them to ſuſtain with patience the long and tedious marches, the decampments, the retreats, the ſickneſſes, and the dangers of a doubtful and protracted war ; ſilencing their murmurs and quelling their diſcontents when they were deſtitute of money and unſupplied with proviſions ; training them by the practice of military evolutions to baffle the deſigns or defeat the attacks of a powerful enemy ; at times artfully magnifying their ſtrength, or dexterouſly concealing their weakneſs ; mitigating the calamities of war and preventing the needleſs effuſion of human blood ; waſting, by prudent delays, the forces of his adverſaries, and tiring them out by avoiding a deciſive action ; and finally triumphing over every obſtacle which ſeemed inſurmountably to oppoſe the progreſs of his arms and the freedom of his country ! And then ſay, was he not juſt ſuch a character as our exigencies required, and did he not purſue juſt ſuch a line of conduct as was beſt adapted to his own critical ſituation ? Had his management been leſs conciliatory, our own diviſions, oppoſite intereſts and views, muſt have proved our deſtruction. Had he been leſs prudent, " our enemies had ſwallowed us up quickly." Had he been leſs economical, our ſcanty reſources would have ſunk our affairs irretrievably low. Or had

he been capable of the mercenary conduct and vile defection of an Arnold, and abandoned his poſt, our armies had been immediately deſtroyed and our cauſe entirely ruined. But WASHINGTON not only poſſeſſed the prudence, the wiſdom, the perſeverance, and the valor which the great occaſion demanded; but the integrity and devotedneſs to the cauſe which confirmed the judiciouſneſs of his appointment to the command of our armies, and aſſured all that the confidence was well placed which intruſted him with the intereſts and the hopes of America.

THE glorious termination of the arduous conteſt which cloſed his military career with ſucceſs, and crowned his country with liberty, independence, and peace, gave to his fame a luſtre ſuperior to that of the moſt ſhining characters in antient or modern times.

FORMER heroes were ſtimulated to deeds of civil enterpriſe or exploits of martial achievement by ambitious deſigns of perſonal aggrandizement or the lawleſs luſt of power: but he accepted command with reluctance; exerciſed it with moderation; voluntarily reſigned it, when he had accompliſhed the purpoſes for which it had been given, with the ſame humility with which he received it; and with cheerful ſatisfaction quitted the ſplendid honors of exalted rank and

public office, for the lowly ſhade of retirement and the unambitious ſtation of a private citizen. Former heroes fought to extend their territories and accumulate property, and returned laden with the ſpoils of foes they had vanquiſhed and cities they had ſacked : but he fought only to benefit his country, endured the fatigues and perils of war, and refuſed all pecuniary remuneration but what was barely adequate to defray his neceſſary expenſes ; deeming his ſelf ſufficiently rewarded in having ſerved his country and deſerved well of it.* How matchleſs this conduct ! How unrivalled does WASHINGTON appear.

INSTEAD of employing an army now entirely devoted to him, and diſſatisfied with being diſbanded without receiving their ſtipulated wages, for the purpoſe of making his ſelf ſupreme or

* " AMBITION never was his leading aim,
But patriotiſm inſpir'd his great empriſe :
He fought by noble actions in her ſervice,
To merit well of his beloved country,
Nor higher did his thoughts affect to riſe."

A BRITISH poet has thus celebrated our hero :

" THE honeſt muſe to virtue true
Now gives the applauſe to merit due ;
With WASHINGTON adorns her ſtrain,
His fixt contempt of ſordid gain,
His fixt contempt of ſordid art,
And all the virtues of his heart,
By wealth untempted or ambition's luſt,
Conſiſtent with himſelf, and to his country juſt."

redreſſing their grievances, he took an affectionate leave of the troops, requeſted them to rely on the juſtice of their much indebted country for the reward of their faithful ſervices, and moſt earneſtly recommended to them "with ſtrong attachment to the Union to carry with them into civil ſociety the moſt conciliating diſpoſitions, and prove not leſs virtuous and uſeful as citizens, than they had been perſevering and victorious as ſoldiers." They complied; for their beloved General gave the advice, and ſet the example. Converting the inſtruments of war into the implements of huſbandry, he retired to enjoy with his happy countrymen the hard-earned bleſſings of liberty and peace.

It would be pleaſing to follow him to his endeared home, to ſhare his hoſpitality and partake his friendſhip, and learn from him a dignified and exemplary diſcharge of the relative and ſocial duties. But he is called to engage in new ſcenes and to perform new ſervices. He had been inſtrumental in rearing the "ſtupendous fabric of freedom and empire: but, though built on a firm baſis and with ſolid materials, though well finiſhed *without*, there were needed ſome connecting braces *within*, and material repairs were found expedient through the whole *interior* which had been conſtructed only as a temporary accommodation. The maſter builder

of the whole was desired, with others, to suggest the necessary alterations and improvements. The result was a new modeling of the inner apartments and the addition of more pillars to support and strengthen the edifice.

The new confederation having been proposed and adopted, Washington was unanimously called upon to administer the government; for we had "no man like minded who naturally cared for our state," who so "loved our nation," and whom the people so much confided in and "delighted to honor." With his characteristic self diffidence and disinterestedness he accepted the trust, and governed us in peace with a *wisdom* excelling the *bravery* with which he had defended us in war. To his "moderation, perseverance and firmness," his judicious administration, comprehensive foresight, and watchful care, do we owe our neutral position, our exemption from the distracting politics and destructive wars of the European nations, and our continued prosperity and peace.

Having been twice elected President of the United States, and for eight years faithfully and honorably discharged the arduous duties of that exalted station, he declined all farther suffrages, choosing rather to lay aside the robes of power and be disengaged from the cares

of ſtate. Yet, on quitting the theatre of public life, on which he had acted ſo conſpicuous and leading a part, he was ſolicitous to improve his influence to the beſt purpoſes; and, therefore, bequeathed to his countrymen his affectionate counſel, the reſult of long experience and judicious obſervation, fraught with the moſt zealous ſolicitude for their welfare and the moſt ardent wiſhes for their proſperity.* He then returned to "that retirement from which he had been reluctantly drawn," and which, he ſaid, "declining years induced him to ſeek, and which repoſe to a mind long employed in public concerns rendered as neceſſary as it was welcome." But neither age nor ſolitude could damp his patriotiſm. He could not become indifferent to his country's welfare, nor inſenſible to its dan-

* The following extract from the *Britiſh Analitical Review* for January 1797, is worth repeating in America. Narrating the events of the preceding year, the writer remarks—"This year [1796] General Washington, the greateſt of contemporary men, reſigned the Preſidency of the American States. Having reſcued his country from the tyranny of the Engliſh government; and reſtored it, by a commercial treaty, to an amicable connexion with the Engliſh nation; he voluntarily retired from power, after giving the moſt profound inſtruction and advice reſpecting union, virtue, liberty and happineſs, between all of which there is a cloſe connexion, with the moſt ardent prayers for the proſperity and peace of America. There is nothing in profane hiſtory to which this ſublime addreſs to the ſtates can be compared. In our Sacred Scriptures we find a parallel in that recapitulation of the divine inſtructions and commands, which the legiſlator of the Jews made in the hearing of Iſrael, when they were about to paſs the Jordan."

gers. "When every thing we hold dear and ſacred was threatened," and it was neceſſary to aſſume the poſture of defence, he magnanimouſly conſented once more to take the Command of our Armies, and to devote the remainder of his ſtrength and life in ſupporting and preſerving the dignity and independence of the United States.

But the laſt act of his great eventful drama was now cloſing. "It correſponded with the whole tenor of his life." Though ſudden and painful the cataſtrophe, he ſupported it with magnanimity and calmneſs; and with graceful dignity made his exit.

Once more he retires from the cares and engagements which had worn out his life; not, as before, to the ſhades of Vernon, but to *the mount of* God: not to a ſhort, interrupted, and imperfect repoſe; but to enjoy the eternal, undiſturbed and perfect refreſhment and bliſs of Heaven. "He reſts from his labors, and his works follow him" to receive the recompence of unfading glory.

Surely, my hearers, he is to be conſidered as one of the moſt precious gifts of Providence to our favored country. Let us bleſs God for all the good which he made him inſtrumental in procuring for us; and that his life and uſeful-

neſs were ſo long continued; that he was ſpared to us till he had accompliſhed the moſt important ſervices we could aſſign him; and that he lived to ſee the nation, whoſe battles he had fought, and whoſe armies he had conducted triumphantly from the field; the nation, whoſe liberties and independence he had aſſiſted in obtaining, and in whoſe government he had preſided, enjoying in the higheſt degree the happy effects of his victories and counſels. May we never forfeit the independence, nor raſhly hazard the proſperity he helped us to acquire, and ſo well taught us how to enjoy and improve. May the general grief at his deceaſe be converted into a general and growing attachment to thoſe noble principles and exalted virtues which he honored and diſplayed. While we admire, let us imitate his diſintereſtedneſs, moderation, equanimity, temperance, hoſpitality, and charity: and may this moral worth be conſecrated as it was in him, by a ſpirit of ſincere, uniform and fervent piety towards God, and a diſpoſition of warm and extenſive benevolence to men.

How great the loſs of ſo much excellence! "How is the mighty man fallen by whom the Lord gave us deliverance!" "How are the weapons of war periſhed" in which we truſted

for defence! "Our breach is wide as the ſea; who can heal it?" Thouſands of men die, and are replaced: but the death of ſuch a man as WASHINGTON leaves a void in the world which ages will not fill up.

THE ADDRESS OF

THE LATE

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

WHEN PRESIDENT, TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,

ON DECLINING BEING CONSIDERED

A CANDIDATE FOR THEIR FUTURE SUFFRAGES.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,

THE period for a new election of a Citizen to adminiſter the executive government of the United States, being not far diſtant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts muſt be employed in deſignating the perſon, who is to be clothed with that important truſt, it appears to me proper, eſpecially as it may conduce to a more diſtinct expreſſion of the public voice, that I ſhould now appriſe you of the reſolution I have formed, to decline being conſidered among the number of thoſe, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I BEG you, at the ſame time, to do me the juſtice to be aſſured, that this reſolution has not been taken, without a ſtrict regard to all the conſiderations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing the tender of ſervice, which ſilence in my ſituation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future intereſt; no deficiency of grateful reſpect for your paſt kindneſs: But am ſupported by a full conviction that the ſtep is compatible with both.

THE acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in the office to which your ſuffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform ſacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your deſire. I conſtantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, conſiſtently with motives, which I was not at liberty to diſregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The ſtrength of my inclination to do this, previous to the laſt election, had even led to the preparation of an addreſs to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical poſture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of perſons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I REJOICE, that the ſtate of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the purſuit of inclination incompatible with the ſentiment of duty, or propriety ; and am perſuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my ſervices, that in the preſent circumſtances of our country, you will not diſapprove my determination to retire.

THE impreſſions, with which I firſt undertook the arduous truſt, were explained on the proper occaſion. In the diſcharge of this truſt, I will only ſay, that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and adminiſtration of the government, the beſt exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconſcious in the outſet, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience, in my own eyes, perhaps ſtill more in the eyes of others, has ſtrengthened the motives to diffidence of myſelf ; and every day the increaſing weight of years admoniſhes me more and more, that the ſhade of retirement is as neceſſary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumſtances have given peculiar value to my ſervices, they were temporary, I have the conſolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political ſcene, patriotiſm does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment, which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to ſuſpend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude, which I owe to my beloved country, for the many honours it has conferred upon me; ſtill more for the ſtedfaſt confidence with which it has ſupported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifeſting my inviolable attachment, by ſervices, faithful and perſevering, though in uſefulneſs unequal to my zeal. If benefits have reſulted to our country from theſe ſervices, let it always be remembered to your praiſe, and as an inſtructive example in our annals, that under circumſtances, in which the paſſions, agitated in every direction, were liable to miſlead, amidſt appearances ſometimes dubious; viciſſitudes of fortune often diſcouraging; in ſituations in which, not unfrequently, want of ſucceſs has countenanced the ſpirit of criticiſm; the conſtancy of your ſupport was the eſſential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I ſhall carry it with me to my grave, as a ſtrong incitement to unceaſing vows, that Heaven may continue to you the choiceſt tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Conſtitution, which is the

work of your hands, may be ſacredly maintained, that its adminiſtration in every department may be ſtamped with wiſdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happineſs of the people of theſe ſtates, under the auſpices of liberty, may be made complete, by ſo careful a preſervation and ſo prudent a uſe of this bleſſing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applauſe, the affection, and the adoption of every nation which is yet a ſtranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to ſtop. But a ſolicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehenſion of danger, natural to that ſolicitude, urge me on an occaſion like the preſent, to offer to your ſolemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, ſome ſentiments, which are the reſult of much reflection, of no inconſiderable obſervation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. Theſe will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only ſee in them the diſintereſted warnings of a parting friend, who can poſſibly have no perſonal motive to bias his counſel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my ſentiments on a former and not diſſimilar occaſion.

INTERWOVEN as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is neceſſary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

THE unity of Government, which conſtitutes you one people, is alſo now dear to you. It is juſtly ſo ; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence ; the ſupport of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad ; of your ſafety ; of your proſperity ; of that very liberty which you ſo highly prize. But, as it is eaſy to foreſee, that from different cauſes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth ; as this is the point in your political fortreſs, againſt which, the batteries of internal and external enemies will be moſt conſtantly and actively, (though often covertly and inſidiouſly) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you ſhould properly eſtimate the immenſe value of your National Union, to your collective and individual happineſs ; that you ſhould cheriſh a cordial, habitual, and immoveable attachment to it ; accuſtoming yourſelves to think and ſpeak of it as of the palladium of your political ſafety and proſperity, watching for its preſervation with jealous anxiety ; diſcountenancing whatever may ſuggeſt even a ſuſpicion that it can in any event be abandoned ; and indignantly frowning upon

the firſt dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the reſt, or to enfeeble the ſacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of ſympathy and intereſt. Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, muſt always exalt the juſt pride of patriotiſm, more than any appellation derived from local diſcrimination. With ſlight ſhades of difference, you have the ſame religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have, in a common cauſe, fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you poſſeſs, are the work of joint councils, and joint efforts, of common dangers, ſufferings and ſucceſſes.

But theſe conſiderations, however powerfully they addreſs themſelves to your ſenſibility, are greatly outweighed by thoſe which apply more immediately to your intereſt. Here every portion of our country finds the moſt commanding motives for carefully guarding and preſerving the union of the whole.

The *North*, in an unreſtrained intercourſe with the *South*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional reſources of maritime and commercial enterpriſe, and precious materials of manufacturing induſtry. The *South*, in the ſame intercourſe, benefitting by the agency of the *North*, ſees its agriculture grow, and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the ſeamen of the *North*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nouriſh and increaſe the general maſs of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime ſtrength, to which itſelf is unequally adapted. The *Eaſt*, in a like intercourſe with the *Weſt*, already finds, and in the progreſſive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find, a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *Weſt* derives from the *Eaſt* ſupplies requiſite to its growth and comfort; and, what is perhaps of ſtill greater conſequence, it muſt of neceſſity owe the ſecure enjoyment of indiſpenſable outlets for its own productions to the weighty influence, and the future maritime ſtrength of the Atlantic ſide of the Union, directed by an indiſſoluble community of intereſt as *one nation*. Any other tenure by which the *Weſt* can hold this eſſential

advantage, whether derived from its own ſeparate ſtrength, or from an apoſtate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, muſt be intrinſically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular intereſt in Union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united maſs of means and efforts, greater ſtrength, greater reſource, proportionably greater ſecurity from external danger, a leſs frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and what is of moſt ineſtimable value! they muſt derive from Union an exemption from thoſe broils and wars between themſelves, which ſo frequently afflict neighbouring countries, not tied together by the ſame government; which their own rivalſhips alone would be ſufficient to produce, but which oppoſite foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues would ſtimulate and embitter. Hence likewiſe they will avoid the neceſſity of thoſe overgrown military eſtabliſhments, which under any form of government are inauſpicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hoſtile to republican liberty. In this ſenſe it is, that your Union ought to be conſidered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preſervation of the other.

These conſiderations ſpeak a perſuaſive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic deſire. Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace ſo large a ſphere? Let experience ſolve it. To liſten to mere ſpeculation in ſuch a caſe were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole with the auxiliary agency of governments for the reſpective ſubdiviſions, will afford a happy iſſue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With ſuch powerful and obvious motives to Union, affecting all parts of our country, while experiment ſhall not have demonſtrated its impracticability, there will always be reaſon to diſtruſt the patriotiſm of thoſe, who in any quarter may endeavour to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the cauſes which may diſturb our Union, it occurs as matter of ſerious concern, that any ground ſhould be furniſhed for characterizing parties, by *Geographical* diſcriminations: *Northern* and *Southern*; *Atlantic* and *Weſtern*; whence deſigning men may endeavour to excite a belief, that there is a real difference of local intereſts and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within

particular diſtricts, is to miſrepreſent the opinions and aims of other diſtricts. You cannot ſhield yourſelves too much againſt the jealouſies and heart-burnings which ſpring from theſe miſrepreſentations ; they tend to render alien to each other thoſe who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our weſtern country have lately had a uſeful leſſon on this head : They have ſeen, in the negociation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the Treaty with Spain, and in the univerſal ſatisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a deciſive proof how unfounded were the ſuſpicions propagated among them, of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic ſtates, unfriendly to their intereſts in regard to the Miſſiſippi ; they have been witneſſes to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain, and that with Spain, which ſecure to them every thing they could deſire, in reſpect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their proſperity. Will it not be their wiſdom to rely for the preſervation of theſe advantages on the Union by which they were procured ? Will they not henceforth be deaf to thoſe adviſers, if ſuch there are, who would ſever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens ?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indiſpenſable. No alliances, however ſtrict, between the parts, can be an adequate ſubſtitute ; they will inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Senſible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your firſt eſſay, by the adoption of a conſtitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of your own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full inveſtigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the diſtribution of its powers, uniting ſecurity with energy, and containing within itſelf a proviſion for its own amendment, has a juſt claim to your confidence and your ſupport. Reſpect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquieſcence in its meaſures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The baſis of our political ſyſtems is the right of the people to make and to alter their conſtitutions of government. But, the conſtitution which at any time exiſts, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is ſacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to eſtabliſh government, preſuppoſes the duty of

every individual to obey the eſtabliſhed government.

All obſtructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and aſſociations, under whatever plauſible character, with the real deſign to direct, control, counteract or awe the regular deliberation and action of the conſtituted authorities, are deſtructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They ſerve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a ſmall but artful and enterpriſing minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumph of different parties, to make the public adminiſtration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of conſiſtent and wholeſome plans, digeſted by common councils, and modified by mutual intereſts.

However combinations, or aſſociations, of the above deſcription, may now and then anſwer popular ends, they are likely in the courſe of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men, will be enabled to ſubvert the power of the people, and uſurp for themſelves the reins of government; deſtroying afterwards, the very

engines which have lifted them to unjuſt dominion.

Towards the preſervation of your government, and the permanency of your preſent happy ſtate, it is requiſite, not only that you ſteadily diſcountenance irregular oppoſitions to its acknowledged authority, but alſo that you reſiſt with care, the ſpirit of innovation upon its principles, however ſpecious the pretexts. One method of aſſault may be to effect, in the forms of the conſtitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the ſyſtem, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at leaſt as neceſſary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human inſtitutions; that experience is the ſureſt ſtandard, by which to teſt the real tendency of the exiſting conſtitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypotheſis and opinion, expoſes to perpetual change, from the endleſs variety of hypotheſis and opinion; and remember, eſpecially, that for the efficient management of your common intereſt, in a country ſo extenſive as ours, a government of as much vigour as is conſiſtent with the perfect ſecurity of liberty, is indiſpenſable. Liberty itſelf will find in ſuch a government, with powers properly diſtributed and adjuſted,

its ſureſt guardian. It is, indeed, little elſe than a name, where the government is too feeble to withſtand the enterpriſes of faction, to confine each member of the ſociety within the limits preſcribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the ſecure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of perſon and property.

I HAVE already intimated to you, the danger of parties in the ſtate, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical diſcriminations. Let me now take a more comprehenſive view, and warn you in the moſt ſolemn manner againſt the baneful effects of the ſpirit of party generally.

THIS ſpirit, unfortunately, is inſeparable from our nature, having its root in the ſtrongeſt paſſions of the human mind. It exiſts under different ſhapes in all governments, more or leſs ſtifled, controled, or repreſſed ; but in thoſe of the popular form, it is ſeen in its greateſt rankneſs, and is truly their worſt enemy.

THE alternate domination of one faction over another, ſharpened by the ſpirit of revenge, natural to party diſſenſion, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the moſt horrid enormities, is itſelf a frightful deſpotiſm. But this leads at length to a more formal and

permanent deſpotiſm. The diſorders and miſeries which reſult, gradually incline the minds of men to ſeek ſecurity and repoſe in the abſolute power of an individual: And ſooner or later, the chief of ſome prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this diſpoſition to the purpoſes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

WITHOUT looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheleſs ought not to be entirely out of ſight) the common and continual miſchiefs of the ſpirit of party are ſufficient to make it the intereſt and duty of a wiſe people to diſcourage and reſtrain it.

IT ſerves always to diſtract the public councils, and enfeeble the public adminiſtration. It agitates the community with ill founded jealouſies and falſe alarms; kindles the animoſity of one part againſt another; foments, occaſionally, riot and inſurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated acceſs to the government itſelf, through the channels of party paſſions. Thus the policy and will of one country are ſubjected to the policy and will of another.

THERE is an opinion that parties in free countries are uſeful checks upon the adminiſtration

of the government, and ſerve to keep alive the ſpirit of liberty. This, within certain limits, is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical caſt, patriotiſm may look with indulgence, if not with favour, upon the ſpirit of party. But in thoſe of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a ſpirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that ſpirit for every ſalutary purpoſe; and there being conſtant danger of exceſs, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and aſſuage it. A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its burſting into a flame, leſt, inſtead of warming it ſhould conſume.

It is important likewiſe, that the habits of thinking in a free country, ſhould inſpire caution in thoſe intruſted with its adminiſtration, to confine themſelves within their reſpective conſtitutional ſpheres, avoiding in the exerciſe of the powers of one department, to encroach upon another. The ſpirit of encroachment tends to conſolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real deſpotiſm. A juſt eſtimate of that love of power, and proneneſs to abuſe it, which predominates in the human heart, is ſufficient to ſatisfy us of the truth of this poſition.

The neceſſity of reciprocal checks in the exerciſe of political power ; by dividing and diſtributing it into different depoſitories, and conſtituting each the guardian of the public weal againſt invaſions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern : ſome of them in our country, and under our own eyes. To preſerve them muſt be as neceſſary as to inſtitute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the diſtribution or modification of the conſtitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment, in the way which the conſtitution deſignates ; but let there be no change by uſurpation ; for though this, in one inſtance, may be the inſtrument of good, it is the cuſtomary weapon by which free governments are deſtroyed. The precedent muſt always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or tranſient benefit which the uſe can at any time yield.

Of all the diſpoſitions and habits which lead to political proſperity, religion and morality are indiſpenſable ſupports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotiſm, who would labour to ſubvert theſe great pillars of human happineſs, theſe firmeſt props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to reſpect and to cheriſh them. A volume could not trace all their connections with public and private felicity.

Let it ſimply be aſked, Where is the ſecurity for property, for reputation, for life, if a ſenſe of religious obligation *deſert* the oaths which are the inſtruments of inveſtigation in courts of juſtice? And let us with caution indulge the ſuppoſition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education, on minds of peculiar ſtructure; reaſon and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail, in excluſion of religious principle.

It is ſubſtantially true, that virtue or morality is a neceſſary ſpring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or leſs force to every ſpecies of free government. Who that is a ſincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to ſhake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, inſtitutions for the general diffuſion of knowledge. In proportion as the ſtructure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is eſſential that public opinion ſhould be enlightened.

As a very important ſource of ſtrength and ſecurity, cheriſh public credit. One method of preſerving it, is to uſe it as ſparingly as poſſible;

avoiding occaſions of expenſe by cultivating peace ; but remembering alſo that timely diſburſements to prepare for danger, frequently prevent much greater diſburſements to repel it : Avoiding likewiſe the accumulation of debt, not only by ſhunning occaſions of expenſe, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to diſcharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occaſioned, not ungenerouſly throwing upon poſterity the burthen which we ourſelves ought to bear. The execution of theſe maxims belongs to your repreſentatives, but it is neceſſary that public opinion ſhould co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is eſſential that you ſhould practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there muſt be revenue ; that to have revenue there muſt be taxes ; that no taxes can be deviſed which are not more or leſs inconvenient and unpleaſant ; that the intrinſic embarraſſments inſeparable from the ſelection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a deciſive motive for a candid conſtruction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a ſpirit of acquieſcence in the meaſure, for obtaining revenue, which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and juſtice towards all nations ; cultivate peace and harmony with all ;

religion and morality enjoin this conduct ; and can it be, that good policy does not equally enjoin it ? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and (at no diſtant period) a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted juſtice and benevolence. Who can doubt, that in the courſe of time and things, the fruits of ſuch a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be loſt by a ſteady adherance to it ? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue ? The experiment, at leaſt, is recommended by every ſentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas ! is it rendered impoſſible by its vices ?

In the execution of ſuch a plan, nothing is more eſſential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies againſt particular nations, and paſſionate attachments for others, ſhould be excluded ; and that in the place of them, juſt and amicable feelings towards all ſhould be cultivated. The nation, which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondneſs, is in ſome degree a ſlave. It is a ſlave to its animoſity or to its affection, either of which is ſufficient to lead it aſtray from its duty and its intereſt. Antipathy in one nation againſt another, diſpoſes each more readily to offer inſult and injury, to

lay hold of ſlight cauſes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occaſions of diſpute occur.

Hence frequent colliſions, obſtinate, envenomed and bloody conteſts. The nation, prompted by ill will and reſentment, ſometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the beſt calculations of policy. The government ſometimes participates in the national propenſity, and adopts through paſſion, what reaſon would reject; at other times, it makes the animoſity of the nation ſubſervient to the projects of hoſtility, inſtigated by pride, ambition, and other ſiniſter and pernicious motives. The peace often, ſometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations, has been the victim.

So, likewiſe, a paſſionate attachment of one nation for another, produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illuſion of an imaginary common intereſt, in caſes where no real common intereſt exiſts, and infuſing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or juſtification. It leads alſo to conconceſſions to the favourite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the conceſſions; by unne-

ceſſarily parting with what ought to have been retained ; and by exciting jealouſy, ill will, and a diſpoſition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld : And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themſelves to the favourite nation) facility to betray, or ſacrifice the intereſts of their own country, without odium, ſometimes even with popularity ; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous ſenſe of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the baſe or fooliſh compliances of ambition, corruption or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, ſuch attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domeſtic factions, to practiſe the arts of ſeduction, to miſlead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils ! ſuch an attachment of a ſmall or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the ſatellite of the latter.

Against the inſidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealouſy of a free people ought to be conſtantly awake ; ſince hiſtory and experience

prove, that foreign influence is one of the moſt baneful foes of republican government. But that jealouſy, to be uſeful, muſt be impartial; elſe it becomes the inſtrument of the very influence to be avoided, inſtead of a defence againſt it. Exceſſive partiality for one foreign nation, and exceſſive diſlike of another, cauſe thoſe whom they actuate, to ſee danger only on one ſide, and ſerve to veil and even ſecond the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may reſiſt the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become ſuſpected and odious; while its tools and dupes uſurp the applauſe and confidence of the people to ſurrender their intereſts.

THE great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as poſſible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us ſtop.

EUROPE has a ſet of primary intereſts, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence ſhe muſt be engaged in frequent controverſies, the cauſes of which are eſſentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it muſt be unwiſe in us to implicate ourſelves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary viciſſitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and colliſions of her friendſhips, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation, invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality, we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own, to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humour or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine

ſenſe. But in my opinion, it is unneceſſary, and would be unwiſe to extend them.

TAKING care always to keep ourſelves, by ſuitable eſtabliſhments, in a reſpectable defenſive poſture, we may ſafely truſt to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

HARMONY, liberal intercourſe with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity and intereſt. But even our commercial policy ſhould hold an equal and impartial hand; neither ſeeking nor granting excluſive favours or preferences; conſulting the natural courſe of things; diffuſing and diverſifying by gentle means the ſtreams of commerce, but forcing nothing; eſtabliſhing, with the powers ſo diſpoſed, in order to give trade a ſtable courſe, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to ſupport them, conventional rules of intercourſe, the beſt that preſent circumſtances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumſtances ſhall dictate; conſtantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for diſintereſted favours from another; that it muſt pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by ſuch acceptance, it may place itſelf in the condition of having given

equivalents for nominal favours, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations: But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism, this hope will be a full recompence for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far, in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of

my own conſcience is, that I have at leaſt believed myſelf to be guided by them.

In relation to the ſtill ſubſiſting war in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your repreſentatives in both houſes of Congreſs, the ſpirit of that meaſure has continually governed me; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the beſt lights I could obtain, I was well ſatisfied that our country, under all the circumſtances of the caſe, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and intereſt to take, a neutral poſition. Having taken it, I determined, as far as ſhould depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perſeverance and firmneſs.

The conſiderations which reſpect the right to hold this conduct, it is not neceſſary on this occaſion to detail. I will only obſerve, that according to my underſtanding of the matter, that right, ſo far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

THE duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which juſtice and humanity impoſe on every nation, in caſes in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

THE inducements of intereſt for obſerving that conduct, will be beſt referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been, to endeavour to gain time to our country to ſettle and mature its yet recent inſtitutions, and to progreſs without interruption to that degree of ſtrength and conſiſtency which is neceſſary to give it, humanly ſpeaking, the command of its own fortunes.

THOUGH in reviewing the incidents of my adminiſtration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheleſs too ſenſible of my defects, not to think it probable that I may have commited many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beſeech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I ſhall alſo carry with me the hope, that my country will never ceaſe to view them with indulgence ; and that after forty five years of my life dedicated to its ſervice, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be conſigned to

oblivion, as myſelf muſt ſoon be to the manſions of reſt.

Relying on its kindneſs in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is ſo natural to a man who views in it the native ſoil of himſelf and his progenitors for ſeveral generations, I anticipate with pleaſing expectation that retreat, in which I promiſe to realize, without alloy, the ſweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midſt of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government; the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I truſt, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.

G. WASHINGTON.

United States, 17th Sept. 1796.